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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Expansion of the 'Maly Koenigsberg' Soviet Airfield
near Chojna (Koenigsberg)/Present Installations/
Flourishing Local BlackmarketPLACE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

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1. "The Soviet military airfield south of Chojna (Koenigsberg, Pomerania) is to be greatly expanded. Special military labor units are now engaged in the preparatory work. This airfield was built by the Germans during World War II and was taken over by the Soviets in 1945. It is subordinated to the Soviet Headquarters in Poland, located in Legnica, Silesia. This airfield was used during the first post-World War II years as a transit and re-fueling point by the Soviet Air Force and later as a military pilot school and training center. Now new concrete runways are to be built to make the airfield suitable for jet air-crafts.
2. "Up to now the airfield has been rather primitive, consisting of only one stretch of ground located between the highway connecting Chojna with Godkow (Jaedickendorf) and a farm called in German Hedwigsberg, and a field road running from this hamlet to Chojna. From the very beginning this airfield was officially called 'Maly Koenigsberg' by the Soviet Army. It should be noted that the Soviets have retained the German names of all places they have taken over in Poland. They never use the new Polish names.
3. "The expanded airfield will form a triangle bounded thus:
 - (a) On the eastern side - 200 m parallel to the Chojna-Godkow highway, as far as the village Mieszkowice (Baerwalde);
 - (b) On the southern side - to the line crossing Mieszkowice, the Schoenberg estate and the Wahlberg estate;
 - (c) On the western side - the Chojna-Metno highway, up to the edge of the forest.
4. "All the above-mentioned localities within this area have been evacuated. The buildings and sheds on the Schoenberg estate were rebuilt only last year and a new PGR (sovkhos) was established there. This new State farm, in 1951 installed at considerable cost, has had to be abandoned. All employees and workers were transferred to other PGRs.

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5. "The new concrete runways will run in an east-west direction. The area of the old airfield is surrounded by barbed-wire fences. [redacted] the new borders of the enlarged airbase were marked only with white-painted bomb-shells from World War II. 25X1X
6. "The air base personnel consists at present of about 1,000 Soviet Air Force men. About 300 of these are attending the pilot school. They have either been sent for training from the USSR or selected from the ranks of new recruits assigned to Soviet troops stationed in Poland. Approximately 100 planes (YAK fighters and MIGURUZNIK training bi-planes) are at the disposal of the pilot school. The courses last about 18 months. Almost all young pilots are assigned after their training period to Soviet Air Force units stationed in Eastern Germany. The school is located in one of the barracks, partly damaged during World War II, which had been completely rebuilt. All hangars have been fully repaired.
7. "The Soviet command has built to date only a large garage for vehicles, a repair workshop and in the southern part of the airfield a field-warehouse for the storage of gasoline and oil. It is interesting to note that neither here nor at other airfields do the Soviets apparently like to use the German-built underground fuel cisterns, which at this airfield are intact and could be used at any time. The Soviets preferred to build a new fuel depot on the surface.
8. "The airfield's Quartermaster Branch administers two large estates, Wilhelmberg and Rehndorf, both situated southwest of Chojna, in the vicinity of the airfield. Both these estates have retained their former German names, being under Soviet management. Only a part of Rehndorf, where there are still some private farms, is called by the new Polish name 'Stoki'. These farmers do not mix with the local population of the surrounding villages. All of them speak Russian fluently and were, according to local opinion, specially resettled there so that 'reliable elements' would be living around the Soviet airfield. The Soviet Quartermaster Branch also operates a hothouse and vegetable gardens, called Parniki, in the northern outskirts of Chojna, near Mickiewicza Street.
9. "At the end of May 1952 a detachment of anti-aircraft artillery was attached to the airfield. Some batteries are stationed on the airfield, others at the Rehndorf estate.
10. "At the Wilhelmberg estate, near the partly demolished brick factory, a Soviet radar station has been set up.
11. "At night the airfield is marked by a number of red signal lights at two points:
- (a) On the northern side of the airfield, where it borders the town of Chojna; these lights have been installed on the top of high buildings;
 - (b) On the southern side, the red lights are installed on a hill, near the Wahlberg estate. This hill is used as a scrap heap for planes. The debris of some 150 old German planes and of Soviet planes wrecked during training covers the hill.
12. "The airfield is connected with Chojna by a concrete road. A railway side-line links it to the Szczecin-Kostrzyn railroad line passing Chojna.
13. "This year a Soviet signal unit installed a new military telephone line which connects the airfield with Barukowo and Trzcinisko Zdroj (Bad Schocznafliess). South of this spa the telephone line is connected with the main telephone cable running across Poland, which is the direct Soviet telephone connection between Moscow and Berlin. The main switchboard is located at the railway station, with two lines operated at the airfield itself.

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14. "In 1951 increasingly strict disciplinary measures were introduced for the crew of the Soviet airfield in Chojna. All personnel formerly accommodated in the town are now billeted at the airfield proper. The houses requisitioned for them have been returned to the Polish municipal administration. All Soviet dependents have been sent back to the USSR.
15. "The Soviet PX and commissary operated on the airfield are no longer allowed to sell alcohol. The result of this regulation is that the only pub in Chojna, the 'Zagloba' on the Tagiellonska Street, is now overcrowded with Soviet officers and airmen.
16. "Soviet military personnel are coming to Chojna not only to buy alcohol. They are the big dealers on the flourishing local black market. The main black market items sold by the Soviets are:
 - (a) Gasoline - 1 Zl per litre. The price on the 'civilian' black market is 1.50 Zl per litre;
 - (b) Oil for car lubrication - 0.50 Zl per litre, which can be resold on the 'civilian' black market for as much as 6-7 Zl per litre;
 - (c) Clocks, taken out of planes - 150 Zl apiece;
 - (d) Tires (brand new) - 30 Zl per tire.

Scraps of aluminum and copper from wrecked Soviet planes at the scrap heap are also selling strong on the local black market.
17. "Soviet-made radio receivers can be bought from Soviet officers and NCOs returning from furloughs in the USSR. All Soviet officers and NCOs stationed in Poland receive only part of their salaries in cash. The rest is deposited to their accounts in the USSR. Black market transactions help the Soviet airmen transfer this money back to themselves. With money from their Soviet accounts, which can be drawn against within the USSR only, they buy while on furloughs at home, radio apparatus and other merchandise which are scarce in Eastern Europe and have a good price on the black market. When reselling these goods at their stations in Poland they get their much-needed cash back and make handsome profits in addition.
18. "Up to 1951 they also used to buy food in Poland to send in parcels to their families or to buyers in the USSR. In view of the increasingly critical food situation in Poland, the Soviets now send 'schnaps' parcels to the USSR for profitable resale.
19. "In Chojna, as in other towns where Soviet garrisons are stationed, the local black market is supplied also with shoes and textiles originating in Soviet Army shops. The prices in these shops are in general about 50 % lower than the prices prevailing on the civilian market. Consequently, they easily find customers for their goods on the black market in Chojna. Residents of the town are no longer afraid of Soviet officers and NCOs knocking at their doors; they are going from house to house peddling their goods.
20. "Apart from these business transactions, Soviet soldiers have little or no contacts with the local population. They live a rather isolated life in their barracks and canteens. Even when visiting the 'Zagloba' pub they stick to each other and do not mix with civilians. This strict isolation is mostly due to the constant control of Soviet Military Police patrols, which make rounds in the town in the evenings and on holidays, keeping a watchful eye on the conduct of the Soviet soldiers."

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